

## 10 Commandments of Firearms Safety

- 1 Always keep the muzzle pointed in a safe direction.
- 2 Treat every firearm as though it were loaded.
- 3 Always make sure the firearm is unloaded and the action open except when actually hunting or preparing to shoot.
- 4 Be sure the barrel and action are clear of obstructions and that you have the proper ammunition for the firearm you are carrying.
- 5 Be sure of your target before you pull the trigger.
- 6 Never point a firearm at anything you do not want to shoot. Avoid all horseplay with a firearm.
- 7 Never climb or jump an obstacle with a loaded firearm.
- 8 Never shoot at a flat, hard surface or water.
- 9 Store firearms and ammunition separately.
- 10 Avoid alcohol and other drugs before or during shooting.



*ONE-MILLIONTH hunter education student Sam Enright with his instructor Kevin Dixon.*



## For More Information

Missouri's hunter and bowhunter education courses are taught by training volunteers and Missouri Department of Conservation employees. The courses are offered statewide and at various times throughout the year.

The volunteer instructors are dedicated, concerned citizens who sacrifice their time to train new and prospective hunters. They realize that hunter education is an important key in the future of hunting.

To find out when and where a course will be scheduled in your area, contact an outdoor skills specialist at the nearest regional office, or go online at [www.mdc.mo.gov/hunt/huntered/](http://www.mdc.mo.gov/hunt/huntered/)

### Conservation Department Regional Offices

#### CENTRAL

1907 Hillcrest Drive  
Columbia, MO 65201  
573/884-6861

#### KANSAS CITY

3424 N.W. Duncan Rd.  
Blue Springs, MO 64015  
816/655-6250

#### NORTHEAST

3500 S. Baltimore  
Kirksville, MO 63501  
660/785-2420

#### NORTHWEST

701 James McCarthy Drive  
St. Joseph, MO 64507  
816/271-3100

#### OZARK

551 Joe Jones Blvd  
West Plains, MO 65775  
417/256-7161

#### SOUTHEAST

2302 County Park Drive  
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701  
573/290-5730

#### SOUTHWEST

2630 N. Mayfair  
Springfield, MO 65803  
417/895-6880

#### ST. LOUIS

2360 Hwy. D  
St Charles, MO 63304  
636/441-4554

### MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

P.O. Box 180  
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0180  
[www.missouriconservation.org](http://www.missouriconservation.org)

Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs of the Missouri Department of Conservation is available to all individuals without regard to their race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. Questions should be directed to the Department of Conservation, P.O. Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102, (573) 751-4115 (voice) or 800-735-2966 (TTY), or to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Division of Federal Assistance, 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Mail Stop: MBSP-4020, Arlington, VA 22203.

HED025 4/07

# MISSOURI HUNTER EDUCATION PROGRAM



*50 years of teaching proper handling of bows and firearms has resulted in safer trips afield for today's hunters.*



Serving nature and you







## History of Hunter Education

The hunter safety program began in the 1940s, following World War II. Sportsmen and hunters developed the program in response to increasing numbers of hunting incidents.

Missouri's first formal hunter safety training was created in 1957 as a voluntary course. In the early 1970s, in an attempt to meet the changing needs of hunters, the hunter safety course was expanded and became the Hunter Education Program.

The new program addressed hunting issues, such as the destruction of wildlife habitat, a growing anti-hunting attitude, and the increased closure of private lands, along with wildlife management, hunter responsibilities and the basics of safe firearms handling. Between 1957 and 1987, more than 400,000 Missourians voluntarily attended Missouri Hunter Education courses.

In 1988, Missouri enacted a mandatory hunter education requirement for all firearms hunters born on or after Jan. 1, 1967. This regulation marked the beginning of a new era in Missouri's Hunter Education Program. In 2006, the one millionth student earned hunter education certification.

## Missouri's Hunter Education Program

The Missouri Hunter Education Course has four goals. It attempts to develop hunters who:

- handle firearms safely in the field and at home
- respect other people and their property
- obey the law
- recognize the importance of hunting and the role it plays in the management of our wildlife resources

The course consists of 10 hours of classroom work. Trained instructors use electronic media and other teaching aids to make the course interesting for both young and old. The following are some of the topics covered:

- firearms use and hunting incidents
- firearms and ammunition
- hunting traditions and ethics
- hunters and their role in conservation
- safe hunting practices
- hunting responsibilities

Those who successfully complete the course receive a Missouri Heritage Card with their personal hunter education number on it. This certification fulfills the mandatory hunter education requirement, not only in Missouri, but also in all the other 49 states, Canada and Mexico. This certification lasts for life and does not have to be repeated.



*500,000<sup>th</sup> hunter education student and avid hunter Ryan Laughlin with his instructor Jack Rose*

Certification is limited to people 11 years of age or older, but all hunters and prospective hunters, even those exempt from the mandatory regulation, are encouraged to attend a course.

## Required to Take Hunter Education

- firearms hunters born on or after Jan. 1, 1967. *Qualifying landowners and lessees hunting on their own land are exempt.*
- people accompanying hunters who are using a Youth Deer and Turkey Hunting Permit. *Qualifying landowners and lessees born before 1967 are exempt when on their own land.*

*Note: Qualifying landowners and lessees hunting on their own land and hunters born before 1967 are exempt from hunter education, although they are welcome to attend the classes. Many enjoy taking the course with children or grandchildren.*

## Bowhunter Education

Although bowhunter education is voluntary in Missouri, trained volunteers and Missouri Conservation Department employees conduct valuable and interesting bowhunter education courses.

These courses fulfill the requirement of states that have a mandatory bowhunter education requirement. This certification also is accepted in Canada and Mexico. There is no age limit for taking a bowhunter education course in Missouri; however, hunters must meet age requirements in the state or country in which they plan to hunt for the certification to be valid.

